

Dear Primary Parents,

Next **Wednesday, February 6th** is **Global School Play Day**. This movement was initiated by two elementary teachers (Tim & Scott Bedley) in California. They were inspired by a **TEDx lecture by Peter Gray**, a psychology professor and researcher at Boston College who studies play and helped document the decline of children's play since the 1950s. In 2015, over **65,000** students participated! Over **177,000** students took part in 2016. In 2017, over **283,000** children celebrated Global School Play Day. In 2018, over **385,000** students from **58** nations participated.

There are five main elements of play:

1. Children make their own decisions.
2. Children are intrinsically motivated.
3. Children become immersed in the moment.
4. Play is spontaneous, not scripted.
5. Play is enjoyable.

<https://www.naeyc.org>

In his **TEDx lecture**, Peter Gray clearly argues the case that today's children do not grow up playing and this has negatively impacted them in many ways:

Over the past 50 years, "...**free play with other children has declined sharply**. Over the same period, anxiety, depression, suicide, feelings of helplessness, and narcissism have increased sharply in children, adolescents, and young adults. ...**The decline in play has contributed to the rise in the psychopathology of young people**. Play functions as the major means by which children

- (1) Develop intrinsic interests and competencies;
- (2) Learn how to make decisions, solve problems, exert self-control, and follow rules;
- (3) Learn to regulate their emotions;
- (4) Make friends and learn to get along with others as equals; and
- (5) Experience joy.

Through all of these effects, **play promotes mental health.**"

- Peter Gray, Ph.D., *American Journal of Play*, Spring, 2011

On Feb. 6th, the primary classes will participate in the Global Play Day for periods 4 and 5. During this time teachers will be observing or participating (but not leading) in play. Children of the primary classes will be mixed to provide for a variety of social interactions. Children may bring games from home as long as the game can be shared/played with others, and that there are no electronics involved. School board games, cards, etc. will also be available.

We look forward to a successful and valuable learning experience!
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Warm regards,
Kathryne

Who? EC, Grades K ~ 5
What? Global Play Time
When? Wednesday, Feb. 6th, Periods 4 & 5
Why? Play is Important
How? Bring games to share with others. No electronic games or devices.

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